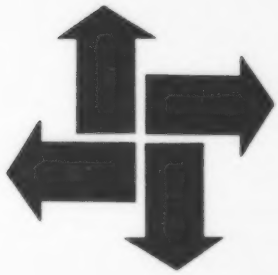
ELEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT 1985/86



ALBERTA COUNCIL ON ADMISSIONS AND TRANSFER

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ISSUES

During the reporting period the Council met once, on April 18, 1985, under the acting Chairmanship of Dr. Horst Betz, to consider a range of admission and transfer issues. Among the matters that Council members considered were: transferability within the nursing education sector, the advice of students regarding the Transfer Guide and the need for effective co-operation with the Council, the utility of the Letter of Recommendation as an admission category for students transferring from public colleges and technical institutes to universities, an effective procedure for reviewing transfer arrangements, and the application of Council's Principle (e) to the effect that the relevance and quality of the applicant's most recent educational experiences should be the basis for admissibility and for transfer credit decisions. The Council members were then joined by former members to review the past work of Council, to consider its future direction, and to honour the retiring Chairman, Dr. Harold S. Baker.

REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL

The Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer has been in operation for a decade. With the retirement of the Council's founding Chairman, Dr. Harold S. Baker, it was timely to review the past work of the Council and to consider how it could serve most effectively in the changing environment of the eighties. Since the inception of the Council in 1974 a number of institutions had emerged as part of the system of post-secondary education in Alberta. Furthermore, a wide array of new programs had been implemented at the post-secondary institutions reflecting the growth and increasing complexity of the system. These developments further amplified the need for policies, guidelines and procedures to facilitate transfer arrangements among post-secondary institutions so as to enlarge educational opportunities for students. Therefore, given the developments in the post-secondary system and the vacancy of the Chairmanship, the Minister undertook a review of the Council. At the conclusion of this reporting period the review is virtually complete and it is anticipated that the formation of a new Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer, reflecting the broad diversity of post-secondary education will be announced imminently.

CHAIRMAN'S RETIREMENT

A retirement dinner in honour of Dr. Harold S. Baker was held following the Council meeting of April 18, 1985. Dr. Baker served as Chairman of the Council from its inception until 1985. His appointment to the Council in the autumn of 1974 followed a lengthy career in the field of education in Alberta. Under Dr. Baker's capable leadership, the Council was established as an indispensible part of the post-secondary system. Under his effective leadership, the Council has improved communication among institutions, increased sensitivity, enhanced the ability of students to transfer to other post-secondary institutions in Alberta, resolved institutional conflicts through mediation, and created the annual Transfer Guide. By 1985-86, the Transfer Guide has come to serve as a reference for students, teachers, counsellors, and administrators, and also as a means whereby arrangements negotiated between individual institutions are publicized and extended on a system-wide basis. The use of this instrument has steadily increased both within and outside the Province.

Since its inception, the Council has ably resolved many admission and transfer problems, and has greatly improved the communication, understanding and goodwill among the institutions. The reputation the Council has achieved both within and outside Alberta is due in large measure to the dedicated work of Dr. Baker.

TRANSFER STUDENT RESEARCH STUDY

To assist in the resolution of an inter-institutional dispute originating in previous years, the Council commissioned a three-year research study.

The dispute arises from differing theories about the impact of educational variables (especially course and classroom learning contexts and "student mix") on educational achievement. The study is taking place over a period of three years, and is designed to throw light on the tenability of the theories by statistical and other means. Various cohort groups will be studied comparatively in terms of academic and demographic characteristics, educational goals, program characteristics, academic environments, academic outcomes, etc.

The first interim report was presented in 1984, the second in June 1985, and a final summary report is expected by September 1986.

PROVINCIAL TRANSFER GUIDES

In June 1985, after ten years of operation, the Council distributed the tenth annual **Provincial Transfer Guide**. The publication is the official statement of transfer arrangements duly negotiated and approved by post-secondary institutions in this province. It has been established both within and outside Alberta as a useful transfer document, and is considered indispensible for transfer operations within the Province.

ADDENDUM A

Council Membership

Universities

Dr. Horst Betz[1] Department of Economics	The University of Ca' ary
Mr. Jack Oviatt Registrar	The University of Lethbridge
Dr. Hayden Roberts Director, College Liaison	University of Alberta
Mr. Hendrik Slegtenhorst[2] Registrar	Athabasca University

Public Colleges

Dr. Chuck Day Vice-President, Instruction	Grant MacEwan Community College
Mr. Lorne Dick Vice-President, Instruction	Medicine Hat College
Dr. Ed Luterbach President	Red Deer College
Mr. Thomas L. Wood Vice-President, Academic	Mount Royal College

Technical Institutes

Mr. Bob Miller Academic Director	S.A.I.T.
Mr. Seeth Seethram Director, Business and Applied Arts	N.A.I.T.

Alberta Vocational Centres

Dr. Michael Andrews President	AVC Edmonton

Chairman Emeritus

Dr. Harold S Baker

Executive Secretary

Ms. Marilyn Patton

[1] Served as Acting Chairman for the April meeting of Council.

[2] Ms. Pam Wolfe attended the April meeting of Council as Athabasca University's representative.

ADDENDUM B

Terms of Reference

The following Terms of Reference were adopted by Council motion on February 14, 1975:

1. The Council shall review current regulations, proposals and practices for admissions and transfer which have been generated by Advanced Education and by institutions and subsystems for the purpose of identifying those guidelines and procedures applicable to all institutions within the system of advanced education.

2. The Council shall develop procedures by which admissions and transfer policies, guidelines and procedures are granted system-wide approval.

3. The Council shall compile, maintain and disseminate a registry of all existing admissions and transfer arrangements within the Alberta system of advanced education.

4. The Council shall monitor the effectiveness of admissions and transfer policies and practices throughout the advanced education system; to this end it may carry out, or request institutions to carry out appropriate studies.

5. The Council shall recommend to Advanced Education and to institutions revisions of policies, guidelines and procedures as it deems necessary.

6. Acting within the provisions of existing legislation, the Council shall upon the written request of an institution, serve as mediator in resolving inter-institutional admission and transfer problems. (The Council will not deal with requests by individuals.)

7. In the event that agreement cannot be reached through mediation, the Council shall upon written request by the institutions concerned, serve as arbitrator.

8. In fulfilling its arbitration role, the Council shall establish arbitration procedures, inform the institutions of these procedures, and inform the institutions of its decisions, which shall be final and binding.

9. The Council shall advise the Minister of any legislative changes which it deems necessary.

10. The Council, at the request of the Minister or institutions, shall comment on unresolved transfer problems related to proposed programs.

11. The Council shall report annually to the Minister of Advanced Education on its activities.

12. The Council will operate with the support of:

    a) Council members, to be reimbursed by Advanced Education for out-of-pocket expenses incurred;

    b) the Chairman, to be paid an appropriate honorarium; and

    c) an executive secretary and such other necessary resources and services to be made available by Advanced Education as required by the Council in the fulfillment of its responsibilities.

ADDENDUM C

Principles, Policies and Procedures

CONTEXT

1. Role and Composition

The Primary goal of the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer is the provision of leadership and direction in the improvement and enlargement of education opportunity for Alberta students through inter-institutional transfer. Implicit in this goal is a commitment to improve communication among institutions of the Alberta post-secondary system — and thus to promote the advantages of a "system" of education, with all that this means for economy and efficiency in educational planning.

In the fulfillment of its role, the Council is engaged in the following activities.

(a) **leadership** — including the development and formulation of policies and procedures whereby transfer credit for courses and programs may be negotiated.

(b) **publication** — primarily the production and distribution of a yearly Transfer Guide listing all transfer credit arrangements for courses and programs within the Alberta post-secondary system, together with statements of relevant policies and procedures, and other documents such as an Annual Report and a counselling brochure entitled "What About Transfer?"

(c) **mediation** — as requested by institutions within the system, to resolve complaints or disputes concerning transfer arrangements and credits, and thus to ensure that the best interests of students are served.

(d) **applied research** — on matters related to the transfer of students throughout the system: e.g. Transfer Patterns study.

Council members are appointed by the Minister as follows:

— from the universities: four representatives (one nominated from each university)

— from the colleges: four representatives (nominated by the Council of College Presidents)

— from the technical institutes: two representatives (nominated by N.A.I.T. and S.A.I.T.)

— from the vocational centres: one representative (nominated by these institutions)

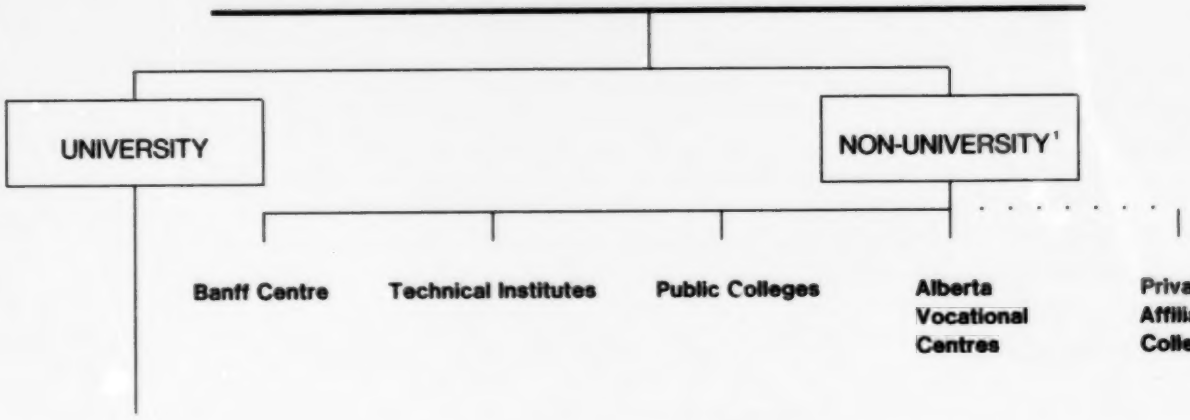
— a chairman and an executive secretary

The Council meets usually on a monthly basis, generally at institutions.

2. Overview of the System

The Council's activities are directed primarily towards the Alberta post-secondary system, which includes four universities, eleven public colleges, three institutes of technology, four vocational centres, The Banff Centre, as well as private affiliated colleges (see chart, page 8). There are, in addition, a number of private non-affiliated colleges — some of which may offer courses which have transfer potential. Although the Council's mandate is directed towards the Alberta post-secondary system, the Council is sensitive to student transferability involving institutions outside of the province. For this reason the Transfer Guide is distributed broadly across Canada as well as in the United States.

ALBERTA POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM



Banff Centre

Technical Institutes

1. Southern Alberta Institute of Technology *Calgary*
2. Northern Alberta Institute of Technology *Edmonton*
3. Westerra Institute of Technology *Stony Plain*

Public Colleges

1. Alberta College of Art *Calgary*
2. Fairview College *Fairview*
3. Grande Prairie Regional College *Grande Prairie*
4. Grant MacEwan Community College *Edmonton*
5. Keyano College *Fort McMurray*
6. Lakeland College *Lloydminster*
7. Lethbridge Community College *Lethbridge*
8. Medicine Hat College *Medicine Hat*
9. Mount Royal College *Calgary*
10. Olds College *Olds*
11. Red Deer College *Red Deer*

Alberta Vocational Centres

1. *Calgary*
2. *Edmonton*
3. *Grouard*
4. *Lac La Biche*

Private Affiliated Colleges

1. Camrose Lutheran College *Camrose*
2. Canadian Union College *College Heights*
3. Concordia College *Edmonton*
4. The King's College *Edmonton*

(Note: there are a number of private non-affiliated colleges throughout the province, some of which may offer courses which are transferable.)

[1] Other provincially administered institutions include various Community Vocational Centres and the Alberta Petroleum Industry Training Centre.

3. Types of Transfer

Within the system of post-secondary institutions, transfer of credit for courses or programs may occur among institutions of a similar type (i.e. from one technical institute to another), as well as between institutions of different types (i.e. from a vocational centre to a college). In the negotiation of transfer arrangements among institutions, the Council recognizes the following major types:

(a) among universities

(b) between universities and the non-university sector

(c) among non-university institutions

(d) from private colleges to universities

(e) from private colleges to non-university institutions.

4. Definition of Terms

In dealing with matters related to transfer, there are several commonly used terms which may require clarification. Some of the more important are:

Accessibility: the degree of openness of institutions to students seeking admission to their programs.

Transferability: the mobility of students among post-secondary institutions by virtue of their having transfer credit (see below).

Advance credit: the award of credit in given courses or programs on the basis of formal and informal learning experiences including: 1) work experience, 2) maturity/life experience, 3) unstructured educational experiences such as self-study, 4) structured educational activity.

Transfer credit: an advance credit awarded on the basis of successful completion of structured educational activities at a post-secondary institution.

Receiving institution: an institution to which students transfer course or program credits acquired at another institution.

Sending institution: an institution from which students may transfer course or program credits to programs at another institution.

Transferable courses: courses developed by an institution to meet its own program objectives but which have transfer potential. Transfer may be negotiated either on the basis of equivalence or of relevance to Programs or courses at another institution (see page 11).

Transfer courses: courses delivered by a sending institution as courses which correspond in description to courses of a particular receiving institution (see page 11).

Selection criteria: categories of qualification, capabilities, or experience (academic or other) which provide the basis for screening and admission (or rejection) of students to programs.

Affiliation: a formal agreement of association or co-operation between two institutions whereby courses and programs offered by the sending institution are substantially the same as those offered by the receiving institution. For such courses transfer credit is awarded. No formal affiliation agreements currently exist except those between three private colleges and the University of Alberta.

PRINCIPLES

The Council endorses the following as basic to its purpose and activities:

(a) **Student access to higher education and the opportunity for student mobility among institutions of higher education in Alberta shall be optimized.**

Barriers to student mobility shall be minimized. The integrity of education programs and certification must, however, be maintained. A student should not be required to repeat previous learning experiences in which he has demonstrated competence, nor should he be granted more transfer credit than his previous learning experiences would warrant for successful completion of the program.

(b) **Negotiation of opportunities for student mobility shall be based on the recognition that while learning experiences may differ in a variety of ways, their substance may be virtually equivalent in terms of content and rigour.**

Insofar as possible, transfer arrangements should allow for maximum recognition of previous learning experiences. The concept of **virtual equivalence** is vital to such arrangements.

(c) **Effective career counselling and optimum mobility require that the student have prior knowledge of at least the minimum transfer credit which he can be awarded. Additional transfer credit may be negotiable on an individual basis.**

(d) **Although responsibility for higher education is shared among various constituents, individual institutions have the primary responsibility for instructional programs. This responsibility includes program design and delivery, determination of academic prerequisites and student admission criteria, and certification of the academic achievement of students.**

In respect of student access to institutions and programs, it is to be emphasized that factors in addition to academic prerequisites often are employed as admission criteria. That is, while possession of academic prerequisites makes an applicant eligible for admission, it does not **guarantee** admission to an institution or to a particular program.

(e) **Institutions have the responsibility and the prerogative to investigate the total educational preparation of applicants seeking admission.**

Such investigation is intended to determine admissibility and appropriate transfer credit, and to counsel applicants. The relevance and quality of the applicant's most recent educational experiences should be the basis for admissibility and for transfer credit decisions. Differences in earlier preparation should not adversely affect consideration of the applicant (see Principle (b) re **virtual equivalence**).

(f) **Students who are granted admission to an institution under a transfer arrangement shall be granted the same rights and privileges as students who began their studies at the institution.**

A POLICY FOR ADMISSION AND TRANSFER OF CREDIT AMONG ALBERTA POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

1. Admission

Admission to a course or program will be granted to any applicant who has fulfilled the admission requirements for such course or program as established by the receiving institution. Where selection procedures are involved in admission to a program, each applicant shall be treated on the same basis as any other person seeking admission to that program.

2. Transfer of credits

Subject to the above requirements there shall be two major transfer arrangements. The Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer will publish annually a Provincial Transfer Guide listing credit equivalencies including both types of transfer arrangement.

A. **Transferable courses and programs:**

Those are developed by a sending institution to meet its own programs and objectives, and bear its own numbers and descriptions. Transfer may be negotiated either on the basis of equivalence, or of relevance. The principle of **equivalence** refers to courses and programs of the sending institution which are identical or similar to those of the receiving institution. The principle of **relevance** refers to courses of the sending institution which are in the areas of disciplines and at the levels of programs offered by the receiving institution, and are therefore appropriate for credit at the receiving institution.

Credits awarded in this category may involve special inter-institutional arrangements or individual assessment.

B. **Transfer courses and programs:**

These are delivered by a sending institution as courses and programs which correspond in description to those of the receiving institution.

3. Special provisions for university transfer

A. **Among universities:** Transfers are assessed on an individual basis by the receiving institution.

B. **From public colleges and technical institutes:** in lieu of the general admission requirements (see 1, above), admission will be granted to any applicant who upon successful completion of at least a full year's study at the sending institution is recommended in writing by that institution as having satisfied the appropriate matriculation requirements or their equivalent.

C. **From affiliated colleges:** Details of transfer arrangements negotiated under affiliation agreements (currently those in effect between the University of Alberta and Canadian Union College, Concordia College, Camrose Lutheran College and The King's College) are included in the Provincial Transfer Guide, and where possible are extended to other universities.

PROCEDURES FOR TRANSFER OF CREDIT AMONG ALBERTA POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

To facilitate the negotiation of transfer arrangements among post-secondary institutions, the Council has established the following set of procedures.

Objective

These procedures are designed to provide a mechanism for the negotiation of transfer and transferable courses and programs, and for their inclusion in the Alberta Provincial Transfer Guide.

Categories

Courses and programs proposed for transfer credit are two main types, each of which involves a different relationship between the sending and receiving institution.

1. **Transferable Courses/Courses with Transfer Potential**

   In negotiations of transfer credit for transferable courses, the sending institution shall supply the receiving institutions with the following information: (a) course description, title, grading practices, weighting and outline, (b) textbooks and other resource materials, and (c) qualifications required for an instructor.

   Additional information may be required at stated intervals for review purposes, or at the discretion of the receiving institutions.

2. **Transfer Courses/Courses in Transfer Programs**

   In negotiations of transfer credit for transfer courses, the sending institution shall supply the receiving institution with the following information: (a) course description, (b) textbooks and other resource materials, and (c) qualifications required for an instructor.

Transfer credit is based on initial negotiations, when the course is first offered by the sending institution. Subsequent negotiations and concurrence of the receiving institution are required where, in view of the receiving institution, course revisions by the sending institution are sufficiently substantial to affect the transfer credit which has been negotiated.

Procedures

1. Each institution shall identify one central contact person (e.g. Registrar or Admissions Officer) who will be responsible for both internal and external distribution of formal transfer proposals and responses.
2. Each institution shall, through its central contact person, maintain and provide on request from other institutions (a) a list of other important institutional contacts for the purpose of facilitating appropriate preliminary discussions, and (b) a description of the internal procedures followed in the institution for the development and/or evaluation of proposals for transfer arrangements.
3. It is expected that proposals for credit will be processed as expeditiously as possible. If the transfer proposal is acceptable, the receiving institution will inform the other institutions in the system accordingly. The transfer normally will be honoured within the sub-system of which the receiving institution is a constituent.
4. If the transfer proposal is not acceptable, the receiving institution shall supply in writing, to the sending institution, the reason for this decision.
5. In the event that agreement has not been reached pursuant to (3) and (4), an institution may submit to the Council a written request for mediation. Where, in its opinion, the Council determines that a dispute concerning transfer exists, the Council may mediate to resolve the dispute.
6. In the event that agreement cannot be reached pursuant to (5), the institutions in dispute may agree to submit the dispute to Council for arbitration. The Council will then establish procedures for the resolution of the dispute, and issue its decision resolving the dispute. The arbitration decision of the Council shall be final and without appeal or review.

7. Transfer arrangements are to be regarded as relatively enduring bilateral agreements — to be altered, amended or deleted only after mutual consultation. Regular discussion of existing transfer arrangements should take place between sending and receiving institutions. Any institution planning program or course changes which could bear on existing transfer arrangements as recorded in the Provincial Transfer Guide shall, insofar as possible, inform those institutions which would be primarily affected, subject where necessary to renegotiation. In cases where renegotiations of a transfer agreement are requested by either a sending or a receiving institution, the onus is on the institution requesting the change to provide the other institution with sufficient notice and lead-time to permit renegotiation to occur before the next edition of the Transfer Guide.

8. Renegotiation of transfer arrangements is subject to the same guidelines as for the initial negotiations (i.e., 3-6).

9. When a new agreement has been negotiated, it replaces the old agreement in the next edition of the Transfer Guide. If no new agreement can be negotiated prior to preparation of the next edition of Transfer Guide, the old agreement will be either removed from the Guide or clearly identified as under review.

INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Within the context of the preceeding policy and procedures, each institution has particular requirements and practices for admission of students and awarding of transfer credit. These requirements are listed annually in the Provincial Transfer Guide and in institutional calendars.